

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
OF THE VILLAGE OF FRENCH SETTLEMENT, July 10, 2019**

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Village of French Settlement met at 16015 Hwy. 16, French Settlement, Louisiana on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2019 at 6 p.m. in regular session convened. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Toni Guitrau with the following members present:

Alderman Teresa Miller, Alderman Danette Carrier

Absent: Alderman Rhonda Lobell

Also, present: Chief of Police William "Bill" Bliss, Assistant Chief of Police Lawrence Callender

A prayer was offered by Alderman Teresa Miller

**Public Comments on Agenda Items:** The mayor opened the floor to public comments on agenda items. There were no comments.

**Guest Speaker(s):** Cary Mosby – Candidate for French Settlement Chief of Police.

**Public Hearing – Amendment #1 Budget of 2019.** The title of Proposed Ordinance No. 1 of 2019 was read by Alderman Miller. The Mayor opened the floor to public comments. There being no public comments, the Mayor adjourned the Public Hearing and called for a discussion among the Board on said Ordinance. Alderman Lobell was absent but had submitted written questions regarding the proposed amended budget. Questions with responses from the mayor were read to the Board and audience and were as follows: 1. Income Line Item 1210 Miscellaneous Income. I see that the budget amount has not changed. Please provide a breakdown of the misc income to date amount of \$2,686.72. **Response:** *This was the funds received from auctioning off a police unit. This was provided to the Board in March's financial documents. At this time, I am not requesting that the budget amount be changed because we may bring in more miscellaneous money in this account over the next 6 months. (breakdown provided).* 2. Expense Line Item 2145 Miscellaneous Administration. Quite a bit over budget. Provide breakdown of expenses to date of \$4991.81. **Response:** *As provided and explained to the Board in May's meeting, the main expense in this account was funds from FEMA PW1043 (replacement of contents) in the amount of \$4500 for replacement computers and a podium. (breakdown provided).* 3. Expense Line Item 2050 Capital Expenditures \$47,598.66 Clarify/Breakdown of this expense. **Response:** *This information was provided in May's financial documents. It was for the purchase of the 2019 police unit and its equipment, as approved by the Board, with FEMA funds and insurance money. (breakdown provided).* 4. Expense Line Item 2210 Office Supplies \$2,128.06. Over budget. I understand that we moved back into the town hall and that supplies were necessary. Does this increase relate to that move? **Response:** *This information has been provided to the Board from January until June 2019. The main expense being the annual update to our accounting program in the amount of \$650.00. The remainder is office supplies and printing of forms for court/duplication fees etc. (breakdown provided).* 5. Expense Line Item 2268 Inside Maintenance - Custodian \$2,495.00 Over budget. Is this due to cleanup in town hall to reopen? If not, reason. **Response:** *The municipal building, and police station are cleaned weekly. When needed during rental season, the pavilion is cleaned weekly. Anything that may need cleaning in or around the buildings are requested including the parking lot area, digital sign etc., painting striping, putting up and taking down of a Christmas tree and decorations, etc. From this year forward, she has to clean the municipal building weekly since we moved back into it at the end of September of last year. The budget will be amended at the end of the year, if needed, to put it in closer to actual to include July – December 2019. (breakdown provided).* 6. Expense Line Item 3167 Deputy Overtime \$2,186.79 Why increase in budget? Breakdown expense to date. **Response:** *When officers are on duty working a wreck, crime, or traffic stop, they can't leave because it's the end of their shift. They must stay and finish the job which includes transporting and booking prisoners, wrapping up traffic stops, wrecks and crimes. They also cover for each other if one is attending a class, on sick leave, etc. For 2 police officers, they have worked a total of approximately 123 hours of overtime for January – July 5, 2019. (breakdown provided). For both officers together, they have worked a total of \$2785 worth through July 8, 2019 so adding another \$800 to the budget is a conservative amount.* 7. Expense Line Item 3174 School/Classes \$1,191.78 Why increase in budget? New Courses? Material? Continuing Education? Details of expenditure. **Response:** *We budgeted \$1000 and they've used almost \$1200 so adding an additional \$1500 to cover the remaining 6 months is understandable. Also, a new chief will be elected in November and may need to attend required classes immediately. (breakdown provided).* Note to Board from Mayor Guitrau: We may need to amend the budget again at the end of the year if we are over or under budget by 5%. As time gets closer, I will know if it needs it or not.

Alderman Miller said she did not understand why we are discussing all of this when the Board had already voted on all of this, and had been provided all of this information for months.

As there were no further questions, a motion to accept Ordinance #1 of 2019 – Amendment #1 – Budget 2019, as presented was offered by Alderman Miller and seconded by Alderman Carrier. A yea and a nay vote was called for and resulted as follows:

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Yeas: Miller, Carrier

Nays: None

Absent: Lobell

**Reading of Minutes and Statement of Finances**

The motion to adopt the minutes and statement of finances for the month of June 2019, as presented, was made by Alderman Carrier and seconded by Alderman Miller. A yeas and a nays vote was called for and resulted as follows:

Yeas: Miller, Carrier

Nays: None

Absent: Lobell

**Reading of Communications:** At no cost to the town, the mayor and town clerk attended the LMA District I meeting in June.

**Emergency Manager Report:** Callender discussed and provided hand-outs for the Board regarding the storm development in the Gulf of Mexico. He said it is best to prepare for the worst and hope for the best. The faith-based churches have reached out to him, even from Florida, and are prepared to travel if we need them. Mayor Guitrau said that Representative Schexnayder reached out to her this afternoon asking if we needed anything. Callender said that Representative Schexnayder has been phenomenal during these events. Callender has been in contact with LP OEP, Mark Harrell and his staff. If French Settlement needs a boat, high-water vehicle, supplies etc. all we have to do is pick up the phone to them. We should begin seeing wind tomorrow. He, the Chief of Police and FSPD officers held a briefing today. They will be housing the officers until the storm is over. The overtime worked will be determined by the storm. If it is a declared disaster, we will apply for FEMA aid. Because of safety, the FSPD officers will stay in town.

**Police Department Report:** Chief Bliss deferred to Assistant Chief Callender. Callender said he wanted to address the police officers staying over after their shifts end. The other night, there was a shoot-out on the interstate. French Settlement officers stopped one of the vehicles involved and were backed up by Port Vincent officers. He said when they need to work a wreck, answer a call or do something like this, they will stay and work which means overtime. We currently have two full-time officers but we need a part-time officer for morning hours for approximately 5 days per week especially when school is in session. He said they would like to have a part-time officer at least 3-5 hours per day, 5 days per week when school is in session, starting at 7:00 in the morning to patrol the school zone and other. He said that anyone interested can email their resume to [frenchsettlement@eatel.net](mailto:frenchsettlement@eatel.net) or drop one off at the town hall. Mayor Guitrau suggested he write what he wanted it to say and she would put it on the town Facebook page. It will also be mentioned in the LP News article. He said they will then recommend a qualified officer to the Board for approval. Alderman Miller thought it would be a good idea to have a backup officer for when the full-time officers are in training. The officers have 30 hours of training per year to retain their post certification. He said the department is actively working to keep drugs out of the community. The mayor asked the Board if they agreed that it is a good idea to hire a part-time officer. The Board agreed.

**Old Business**

- **Grounds Report:** All is in good condition on the municipal grounds and preparation is being made for a possible tropical storm or hurricane this weekend. It has been confirmed that the museum AC/Heat has been plugged into the pavilion meter instead of the museum meter. The town's electrician is coming out soon to put it as it belongs.
- **Road Report:** Nothing to report.
- **LGAP GRANT:** It has been confirmed that the \$6500 can be used as a match to a FEMA grant to purchase two natural gas generators. We received the fully executed contract from the Governor's office. We were in touch with LP OEP regarding the generators today.

**New Business: Renew Inside Maintenance Contract.** There were no changes/amendments to the contract for inside maintenance with Angela Eastridge. Since September 2018, the Municipal Building must be cleaned weekly. That will add to the total cost per year. A motion to accept the renewed contract as presented was made by Alderman Carrier and seconded by Alderman Miller. A yeas and a nays vote was called for and resulted as follows:

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Yeas: Miller, Carrier

Nays: None

Absent: Lobell

**Local Events:** None

**Adjourn:** A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Carrier and seconded by Alderman Miller. A yeas and a nays vote was called for and resulted as follows:

Yeas: Miller, Carrier

Nays: None

Absent: Lobell

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/S/Toni Guitrau, Mayor

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/S/Pam Melancon, Municipal Clerk